1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

not illegally fishing and that they were not stealing from the reserves. Incidents of this period are told in the stories of Tuiva and Kupolu, and in the story of the *pule toe* (pp. 387, 395).

Numerous references in the stories and traditions of the island show that stealing from the reserves was an ever-present problem that challenged both supernatural and secular supervision of these reserved areas. The only major sin in Pukapukan society seems to have been stealing from the reserves; beside this, all other types of antisocial conduct become mere peccadillos. Where the law breaker meekly accepted punishment, secular or supernatural, all was well, but a thief surprised by a guard and resisting arrest either in shame or in desperation might be killed outright in the succeeding brawl. Several ancient graves on Motu Ko are still pointed out as the graves of thieves who were surprised on the reserve and killed.

TALO BEDS

The center of the reserve of Uta is a communal talo bed controlled by the village of Loto (pl.1,*B*). This large area is subdivided into 11 smaller areas (*si lulu*), named after nine land divisions in the reserve. There are four similar *si lulu* in the reserve of Niua. The people of Ngake have more than 15 large talo cultivations on Motu Ko.

Tradition states that the main talo beds on Wale were formed originally by Tumulivaka, son of the god Mataliki. Tumulivaka became troubled in his heart at the number of gods who were taking up residence on Pukapuka. He wished to be separated from the gods, so he stood at Te Auma, the northern point of Wale, and stuck his foot in the sand. This made a big separation or channel in the land from Te Auma to the pond, Te Vaitaue, in Ngake village, and thence to the sea. As this follows the line of the present talo beds, it is common to refer to these beds as Te Akanga-vae (Striking-of-the-foot). Mataliki with his wife and the gods lived on the western side of the division, *te uvuli tuvuna*, so called because it faced the setting sun, while Tumulivaka and his sister, Te Matakiaia, lived on the eastern side, *te matoa tuvuna*. As the island became more populated, this natural excavation, widened and deepened in places, was used for talo beds.

It is probable that the first migrants to the atoll found natural hollows in the land, caused by wave action when the atoll was being built up above sea level, and used these hollows as the basis for the talo beds. Successive generations continued the work of excavation, no light task with coconut shells, coconut baskets, and digging sticks as the only implements. Subsurface water seeped in and rain water helped to rot the artificial fill of dried coconut midribs, *hetenae* ferns, and other plant material into a humus soil, which became in time excellent soil for talo cultivation. The results of the excavations are seen in the raised embankments (*tua motu* or *tua ai*) which follow the line of the talo beds and divide one bed from the next. That natural hollows were first used as beds is indicated by hillocks about 40 feet high running beside some beds. It is impossible to imagine that

9:Beaglehole & Beaglehole E-5 (1934-1935) 1939
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114 124 597 The first paragraphs annotate a somewhat typical conflict, which may be either acute or implicit, between loyalties to blood-parents and those to adopted parents, a conflict that is all the more striking here because Lua did not learn the identity of her own blood-parents until she was about five years old. Adoption occurs with great frequency in Pukapuka, either before or soon after birth. Its function in general is to obtain an heir who will continue the paternal descent-line. Informants were fond of dwelling on the heinousness of those blood-parents who seek to attract back to themselves children they have allowed to be adopted. [673] Along with stealing from village-controlled reserve food-lands *(motu)*, such disloyalty to the adopting parents may be classed as the supremely ugly Pukapukan sin.

114 776 Belief in spirits and the fear of their ghostly visitation upon the living is still very real. Dreams are caused by ghosts, sickness as well, sometimes otherwise unexplainable pregnancies. Children are also disciplined by the threat that [861] ghosts will catch them if they misbehave.

882 [532] Marriage for the Pukapukan did and does come relatively late in maturity. Its object is to secure children who will complete the continuity of the descent-line. Boys and girls formerly went naked until physiological maturity. Then they were formally tested and admitted to sociological adulthood. The girl was allowed to wear the coconut-leaf kilt, the boy his coconut-leaf or pandanus *malo*. Along with this went full participation in village activities and an adult's share in food divisions. Thereafter the young people were given considerable personal freedom. Such freedom was accepted and enjoyed to the full. The infrequent children [848] born out of wedlock were accepted with thanks by the mother's family because they meant extra food in village [836] food-divisions. Chastity before marriage was and is a meaningless concept to the Pukapukan. When the young people tire of a life of freedom, or when one forms a romantic attraction for another of the opposite sex, then a permanent [585] alliance is announced by the establishment of a patrilocal domicile, socially validated by the holding of a food-division and the exchange of gifts between the families of the bride and groom.